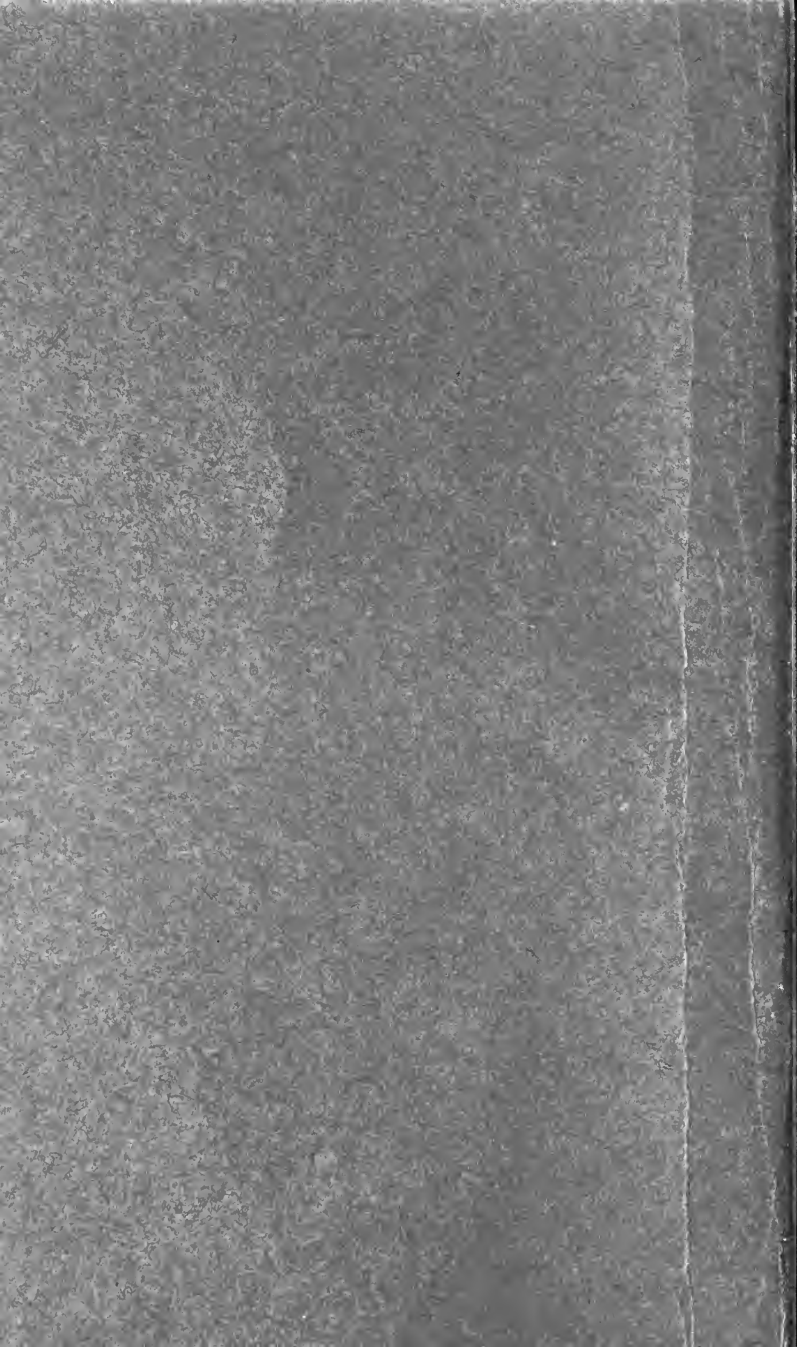


Peake, Richard Brinsley
In the wrong box

PR
5167
P17I6





IN
THE WRONG BOX ;

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS:

(FOUNDED ON A TALE IN THE WORK ENTITLED "THREE COURSES AND
A DESSERT.")

BY

R. B. PEAKE,

Author of the "Climbing Boy," "Smuggler Count," "Evil Eye," &c.

FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

ROYAL OLYMPIC THEATRE,

FEBRUARY 3rd, 1834.

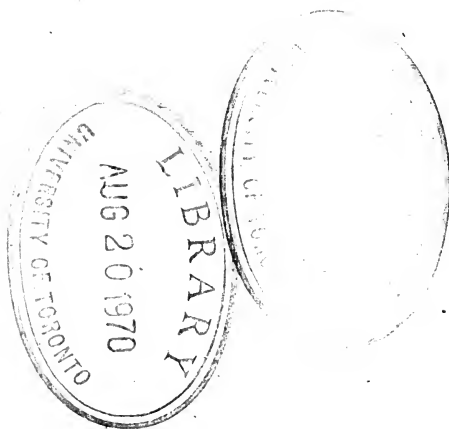
LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

(Agent to the Dramatic Authors' Society.)

1834.

PR
5167
P17I6



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Doctor Plympton, (<i>Master of a Finish-</i> <i>ing Academy</i>)	}	Mr. F. MATTHEWS.
Godfrey Fairfax, }	(<i>his Pupils</i>) }	Mr. J. VINING.
George Wharton, }		Mr. J. BLAND.
Charles Fitzmartyn, (<i>formerly a Pupil</i> <i>of the Doctor</i>)	}	Mr. HOWARD.
Cæsar, (<i>a Porter</i>)		Mr. KEELEY.
Job Houseleek, (<i>a Labourer in the ser-</i> <i>vice of Dr. Plympton</i>)	}	Mr. SALTER.
Dick, (<i>Fitzmartyn's Groom</i>)		Mr. COLLIER.
Strawquill, (<i>Clerk of Waggon Office</i>)		Mr. WYMAN.
Ikey, (<i>a Porter</i>)		Mr. HUGGINS.
Captain of West Indiaman		Mr. J. WEBSTER.
Isabella, (<i>Daughter of Dr. Plympton</i>)		Miss FITZWALTER.
Patty Wallis, (<i>her Maid</i>)		Mrs. ORGER.

CRIER, BLACK PORTERS, BOATMEN.

Scene in the vicinity of Bristol.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author has to express his thanks to MADAME VESTRIS for the promptitude with which this Drama was accepted, and produced ; he has also to acknowledge the attention and activity of the Stage-manager, Mr. JAMES VINING.

To the PERFORMERS collectively, the Author is greatly indebted ; and if he particularizes the names of Mrs. ORGER and Mr. KEELEY, it is because they had to bear the principal burthen of an *excellently acted* Farce.

Many obligations are due to the ingenious writer of the work entitled, “ THREE COURSES AND A DESSERT.”

February 10th, 1834.

IN THE WRONG BOX.

ACT I. — SCENE I.

Garden of DR. PLYMPTON'S house. Wing of the mansion on one side. Antique high wall—iron gate.

(Enter PATTY WALLIS, R. H. door of house.)

PAT. Not here yet. I am in a nest of scrapes—and I can't get out of it. What the deuce am I to do with Miss Isabella's three young lovers, and her old father? I have wound myself into the confidence of all. Where is Mr. Charles Fitzmartyn?—*(Looking off, at gate.)*—He knows that his rivals, mad Godfrey Fairfax, and sober George Wharton, are both at this moment engaged in their studies with Doctor Plympton.—*(Looks off.)*—Mr. Fitzmartyn comes!—dear, dear, how imprudent to bring his dog with him!

(Enter FITZMARTYN, followed by a Newfoundland dog—gate, 2nd E., L. H.—the dog goes off R. H.)

FITZ. Well, Patty, what news?

PAT. You'll take and spoil all, by bringing that scampering Neptune with you.

FITZ. Curse the dog! I forgot—

PAT. Yes: but he does not forget his way all over the premises—he was your pet, here, during the whole time you were under the tuition of Dr. Plympton.

FITZ. 'Faith, Patty. Confined amongst the classics, for five years, within these four walls. . . .

PAT. Not so loud,—he may hear you.

FITZ. We are quite secure. Good old daddy Plympton is just now administering quintessence of Greek to my two rivals.

PAT. Yes; and if your dog administers a little quintessence of *bark*—that will disturb them: sir, there are great difficulties to overcome.

FITZ. Psha! I'm a fox-hunter,—the higher the leap, the better I like it. There's a letter for your mistress;—and here, Patty, for yourself, a bran new sovereign!

PAT. La! sir, the good old ones do very well for me; we don't see many better in the world.—(*Clock chimes without.*) Bless me! I must go in and put the luncheon on. Don't be seen here, Mr. Fitzmartyn, for love, or money. (*Exit R.H.*)

(JOB is crossing, unperceived, at the back, L. H., after
PATTY is off.)

FITZ. Beautiful Isabel, how ardently I adore you! By hook or by crook, before one week is out, I will carry off Isabella Plympton!—(*Sees JOB.*)—Confusion!—a listener?

(JOB touches his hat.)

JOB. (*Aside.*) Master told me to be polite to every body. Pray, sir, who may you have the pleasure of being?

FITZ. (*Apart.*) Stranger to me. (*To JOB.*) My good man, I—I only wished to inquire the way to Bristol. (*Apart.*) Where is Neptune?

JOB. If you turns to the right, and follows your nose, sir, Bristol will appear to your eyes, sir. (*Points off.*)

FITZ. Confound the dog!

JOB. Sir?

FITZ. (*Whistles.*) Thank you, my friend—good day.

(*Exit at gate, whistling.*)

JOB. Aye! there you be again with your pranks; the old gentleman was main glad when you left his finishing academy (but that was afore I come to it). What such great fellows want with going to school, I don't know. I left *my* school at ten years of age, and glad enough I was to do 'ut. Eh—the Doctor!

(*Enter DR. PLYMPTON—house, R. H.*)

DOCT. P. Hey! Job, I thought you were newly thatching the pig-styes.

JOB. Yes, sir.

DOCT. P. What do you want here?

JOB. While I were at work, sir, who do you think comes dashing in 'mongst the pigs, and smelling their noses?

DOCT. P. Eh! *Who!*—smelling their noses?

JOB. *Who* but Neptune, Mr. Fitzmartyn's dog! Thinks I, please the pigs, if that dog is here, t'other puppy isn't far off—

DOCT. P. Well? Well?

JOB. So I left Neptune sky-larking with the pigs; and came round here to the iron gates; when, sure enough, I *finds* Mr. Fitzmartyn!

DOCT. P. Indeed? Job, the next time say "*found*," instead of "*finds*."

JOB. I overheard young squire swear that he would carry off Miss Jezabel.

DOCT. P. Say "Isabel"—not "Jezabel."—When I condescend to correct you in your mode of utterance, Job—

JOB. Sir?

DOCT. P. Your pronunciation; you ought at least to say "Thank ye, sir."

JOB. Thank ye, sir. Mr. Fitzmartyn said he would carry off Miss Isabel, either by *a* hook, or by *a* crook.

DOCT. P. Are you sure?

JOB. Sartain.

DOCT. P. Say "*certain*," next time, Job.

JOB. Well, he said, he'd run away with Miss, *certain next time*!—Thank ye, sir.

DOCT. P. Humph! That young gentleman has always been opposed to my ideas of propriety—and I avow, that if, in the course of my long life, I ever entertained an antipathy towards a human being, Charles Fitzmartyn is the man.

JOB. Yes, sir; and *his man* be just as bad. Dick—Dick Darky, sir: he was the cause of *this here* lame leg of mine.

DOCT. P. Don't say *this here* lame leg.

JOB. Well, sir, *that there* lame leg of mine! Thank ye, sir.

DOCT. P. He is beyond tuition!

JOB. Dick persuaded me, sir, to step into a *humane* man-trap; and, by gosh, it broke my leg—there was humanity.

DOCT. P. Job! Your intelligence alarms me.

JOB. *My intelligence* be enough to frighten any body.

DOCT. P. Go and double-lock that iron gate, and bring me the key.

JOB. Yes. Thank ye, sir. (*Brings key.*)

DOCT. P. Job, I must employ you in a different mode; I know your integrity.

JOB. Thank ye, sir.

DOCT. P. You shall take your rest in the day time ; and—leave the rest to me.

JOB. Thank ye, sir.

DOCT. P. I shall add the sum of two shillings per week to your wages.

JOB. Thank ye, sir.

DOCT. P. But, throughout the year, you must sit up all night.

JOB. Thank ye, sir.

DOCT. P. Become a watchman outside the wall ; and hail, rain, blow, or snow, you shall patrol up and down from the time it is dark until the morning.

JOB. Thank ye, sir.

DOCT. P. There, go back—get to bed directly, because I shall wish you to be wakeful to-night.

JOB. Thank ye, sir ; but, if you please, I had rather have my dinner and beer first.

DOCT. P. Ah ! I forgot that.

JOB. Thank ye, sir—(*crosses*)—but I did'nt.

(*Exit JOB, L.H.U.E.*)

DOCT. P. What a new light dawns on me ! Until this moment it has never entered my brain. My child—my beloved Isabel—is it possible she could quit the arms of her fond old father ? The idea of *her* marriage ! Well-a-day ! And Fitzmartyn to despoil me of such a darling ! The equanimity of my temper is shaken from its equilibrium. (*Looks round.*) My outer defences are perfect ; now to look to the inner works—

(*Enter PATTY, house R. H.*)

Ah, Patty !—Patty must become an engineer in petticoats. I must win her to my cause at once, and by some enticing

present. Yes ; I know human nature. Patty, come hither. I have long, Patty, thought you a very superior person—

PAT. (*Aside.*) Not the only one who has thought so.—(*Curtsies.*)

DOCT. P. Patty, I am about to make you a splendid present—a present congenial to your upright mind—

PAT. (*Aside.*) There's a gros-de-nap coming.

DOCT. P. (*Taking books from his pocket.*) Here are two books.

PAT. (*Disappointed.*) Books !

DOCT. P. “ Hervey's—

PAT. Fish-sauce, sir ?

DOCT. P. No ; “ Hervey's Meditations amongst the Tombs”—(*PATTY winces*)—and “ Young's Night Thoughts.”

PAT. (*Aside.*) That's the best of the two—got “ Love's Young Dream” in it, mayhap.

DOCT. P. Patty, keep a strict watch on your young mistress. That hot-headed Mr. Fitzmartyn has nefarious intentions.

PAT. La, sir, you don't say so !

DOCT. P. Patty, would you believe it ? he has sworn to carry her off. I depend on your vigilance. I shall keep the key of this gate, and answer all comers myself. (*Produces a smaller key.*) Here also is the key of the back-door leading from my study—all safely locked. (*PATTY is turning up her nose at the books.*) In addition to those volumes, if you are a good girl, Patty, I will give you a silk gown of the late Mrs. Plympton—one in fashion—I mean one that is very much worn.

PAT. (*Apart.*) A silk gown of the late Mrs. Plympton !—one that *is very much* WORN—I don't doubt it.

(*Enter ISABEL, R.H.*)

ISAB. Patty, I have been ringing for you.

DOCT. P. Ah, my dear Isabel! we must all prepare to say farewell to a friend. Godfrey Fairfax bids us adieu this afternoon. I have myself packed up his classics in a large chest. Do not be surprised, Isabel, to see the box in your room; there was such a current of cold air in the long gallery—our library—that I made Patty bring the chest into your apartment. The chances are, that the ship which is to convey Godfrey to Demerara may sail to-night.

ISAB. Sail to-night, sir?—so sudden!

DOCT. P. It will be a sad parting. A fine-hearted West Indian, of immense expectations,—though of an impetuous temper, I shall much regret his absence.

ISAB. So shall I—he has been ever kind.

PAT. (*Apart.*) A sigh!—Umph.

DOCT. P. Patty! (*Aside.*) I must speak privately to the girl—I must dissemble, and send her away pleasingly employed. (*To her.*) Patty!

PAT. Sir?

DOCT. P. Come into my study. On the book-case there is a skull—

PAT. (*Unwilling.*) Oh, ye—yes, sir.

DOCT. P. It wants dusting. Don't go flourishing your hand-brush, and knocking out any of the teeth into your shovel! Come.

PAT. Ye—yes, sir. (*Aside.*) Lauks-a-mercy! that raw, bald, bony head!

(*Exeunt PATTY and DOCTOR PLYMPTON, door R.H.*)

ISAB. Here comes the impetuous Godfrey.

(*Enter GODFREY FAIRFAX, R.H.U.E.*)

GODF. Isabella ! my own Isabella !

ISAB. Godfrey, restrain your raptures.

GODF. Restrain ! Check the Falls of Niagara ; it would be as easy to accomplish that, as to restrain the ardent pulsations of the most devoted love for you, my dearest—

ISAB. Godfrey, you rave !

GODF. It would be useless to implore your father's consent to our union.

ISAB. You have not yet, sir, gained mine.

GODF. Isabella, do not drive me to desperation, or wild as the sirocco ! I—

ISAB. Godfrey, hear me—With your immense expectations, it would amount, in my father's opinion, to a breach of duty to your relatives, his employers. I really must hear no more of this.

GODF. (*Gloomily.*) Alas ! Isabel, you then love another !

ISAB. Sir ! I—

GODF. The reckless Fitzmartyn. I have long had my doubts and fears. He shall, however, answer for his presumption. (*Takes out pistols from his pocket.*)

ISAB. Mercy on us ! Godfrey, are you mad ?

GODF. Mad !—mad !—I shall be raving mad, Isabella ! Your cruelty will drive me to insanity. (*Kneels to her passionately.*) I quit this house to-day for my native island—consent to fly with me—I love you better than any other living creature dares to love you. (*Glances at the pistols.*)

ISAB. Mr. Fairfax, this conduct is outrageous. I have ever esteemed you ; but I dare not now listen—Farewell, sir ; farewell.

(*Exit hastily, R.H.*)

GODF. Esteemed me? Has she not *loved*? or have I been the dupe of a heartless coquette? No, no, no; she must—she shall be mine. I have luxuriated in the idea of a lasting happiness of wedded love. Have I not shewn it to her in a thousand instances? did I not wring off the neck of her canary bird because I thought she preferred *it* to *me*?—little, jealous, yellow rascal! (*Looks off.*) Eh! what is that I see yonder? Fitzmartyn's dog! Ah! is it so? I have often suspected a correspondence by means of that dog. Yes; even now a letter may be fastened to the collar. I will ascertain. Psha! what imbecility does jealousy create!—but I am infuriated!

“ The ruling passion, be it what it will,
The ruling passion conquers reason still!”

(*Exit hastily, R.H.*)

(*Enter PATTY, door R.H.*)

PAT. The Doctor is compelled to attend a vestry—he has gone out at the private door—we are all left by ourselves. She is too sly to let me know who she loves; but I know who pays best. Now, if she had a mind to make a dash, and become Mrs. Charles Fitzmartyn, I think I could contrive a plot.

(*Re-enter ISABEL, door R.H.*)

ISAB. Oh, Patty! how wearisome is this life, day after day!

PAT. Yes 'um—in this old ramshackling place!

ISAB. Built, I believe, in James the First's time.

PAT. Aye; before the *Rexes* came to the throne of Great Britain. But why should you be unhappy here, with three good-looking young men desperately in love with you?

ISAB. Ah, Patty ! it is a sad case !

PAT. No. 1, Wild Mr. Fitzmartyn, wants to carry you off ; No. 2, mad Mr. Godfrey Fairfax, is going to carry himself off to the West Indies ; and No. 3, amiable Mr. George Wharton, will carry himself off in a galloping consumption, if either of the others carry their point.

ISAB. From the strange violence of Godfrey Fairfax I positively tremble for my life.

PAT. La, Miss, what do you mean ?

ISAB. He positively produced pistols—I know not for what purpose—(*Two pistols are fired off, without, R.H. at the back of the stage.*) Mercy on us ! surely they have not met ? Patty, discover what has happened. My bed-room—I shall lock myself in ; tap twice. What a state of perplexity !

(*Exit ISABEL hastily, door R.H.*)

PAT. This is a pretty kettle of fish !

(*Re-enter GODFREY, with pistols, R.H.*)

GODF. His fate is sealed, however. It is hard to shoot so fine a fellow, but it was almost in self-defence.

PAT. (*Trembling.*) Mr. Godfrey !

GODF. (*Half apart.*) He's dead and sprawling at any rate.

PAT. What have you done, Mr. Fairfax ?

GODF. I was compelled to fire at him with both pistols. It does not matter—I shall be away to-night, before it will be discovered who committed the act. Come hither, girl.—(*Takes her by the wrist.*)—I embark this evening—Isabel must accompany me to Demerara.

PAT. It is impossible that she can leave the premises.

GODF. Dare you to demur ?

PAT. Doctor Plympton has got the key of the iron gate in his pocket. Job, the lame thatcher, watches outside the walls.

GODF. Patty, I have made up my mind.

PAT. (*Aside.*) He is *out* of his mind. Oh! my pulses, sir.—(*Struggling.*)

GODF. Hear me—if you do not contrive that your mistress elopes with me, I will shoot you all, one by one, and myself afterwards—these pistols have settled one affair to-day!

PAT. (*Apart.*) Poor Muster Fitzmartyn!

GODF. Devise a scheme. Firstly, there shall be a twenty pound note for you.

PAT. What did you say, sir? Oh! Mr. Godfrey, I can think but of one plan—yes, it may be feasible. . . .perhaps—

GODF. Speak!

PAT. O lauks, let me try to collect my senses!—them pistols—oh! Do you intend to carry your Greek and Latin gibberish books to the West Indies?

GODF. Consume the books!—I am thinking of Isabella!

PAT. Those books are in a large chest in Miss Plympton's sitting room.

GODF. Idiot! I know that.

PAT. That chest is quite large enough to contain Miss Isabella, if she could be persuaded to trust herself within it.

GODF. Ah! a gleam of sunshine crosses my fevered brain.

PAT. (*Apart.*) Moonshine!

GODF. Yes, yes—she must, she shall consent—I will convey her on board the vessel.

PAT. But do put away these pistols! O you dreadful man, what have you done with poor Mr. Fitzmartyn?

GODF. He *has* been here then, has he?

PAT. Mr. Fairfax, who did you shoot at just now?

GODF. Who?—why Neptune, confounded Fitzmartyn's Newfoundland dog.

PAT. You have frightened Miss Isabella out of her wits. I will try and cajole her to make her escape from this house—she is ever complaining of the weary life she leads. That trunk appears to be the only chance.

GODF. Can I trust you, Patty?

PAT. The proof of the pudding shall be in the eating. Come to the old gallery, a quarter of an hour hence, and you shall see Miss Isabel safely packed in your large box.

GODF. If you raise my hopes to crush me!—

PAT. There is the stained glass window that looks into her sitting room—peep through that—it will be impossible for me to deceive you.

GODF. Yes, I will go secretly—unpack the trunk—conceal the books.

PAT. And if I can persuade her? I almost think I can:

GODF. Patty, contrive this, and here are your twenty pounds—*(shewing note.)* *(Exit R.H. door.)*

PAT. Ha! ha! ha! Well, mad-headed as he is, I never thought he would have swallowed that—it is the only lie I can at present devise to get rid of him. Now, I must prepare my missis; if two women lay their heads together, I doubt whether even a hair-brained Hingyman is a match for them. *(Exit PATTY, R.H. door.)*

SCENE II.

An old-fashioned Gallery (partly fitted up as a Library) in DR. PLYMPTON'S house.—A stained glass window, and door in the flat.—Doors leading to other rooms on opposite sides.

(Enter GEORGE WHARTON, L. H. side door.)

GEORGE W. What is all this strange bustle?—it is not caused alone by the expected departure of Godfrey Fairfax. Ah! I fear me, Isabel, that your unpresuming beauty is the cause of the apparent wildness of my old school-mate. I saw him just now shoot Fitzmartyn's dog through the head—I must watch for the safety of Isabel, encouraged by the blushing avowal, that she esteemed me more than any other individual excepting her father.—What sound was that? *(Looks through the stained glass window, L. flat.)*—Fairfax! in Miss Plympton's room! I know she is absent, and shall take the liberty to watch his movements; I detest the office of a spy, but, as Gay observes—

“When a lady's in the case,
All other things, of course, give place.”

Master Godfrey, I will discover the state of your heart.

(Enters door, but peeps.)

(Enter GODFREY, from door in flat, R. H.)

GODF. How my heart beats, but my chest is empty!

GEORGE W. *(Apart.)* Eh!

GODF. Homer, Horace, Virgil, and Co., are pitched out of window into the parsley bed. Isabel I know to be a little romantic, and devotedly fond of a frolic—she has courage

enough to venture, if she has the inclination. I have bored air holes enough in the trunk, and—

(Enter PATTY, on tip-toe, L. H.)

PAT. Get you out of the way—if Miss Isabel sees you here, she will immediately retract.

GODF. But your bargain was, ocular proof.

PAT. That you shall have; depend upon it, she will not be happy until you are on shipboard.

GODF. Until we are on shipboard—dear girl!

PAT. Now, enter your study; do not appear till I call you.

GODF. So far, so well,—Patty, I'll make your fortune; you shall come out after us to the West Indies, and marry—any one you like. *(Exit at side door, R. H.)*

PAT. Thankye for nothing—none of your woolly-headed Hottenpots for me, as long as there is English flesh and blood to be got.—*(Calls off, gently.)*—Miss, Miss Isabel.

GEORGE W. *(At door, apart.)*—Patty in the plot against the dear girl!

(Enter ISABEL, L. H.)

ISAB. Patty, I have thought again on your whole device, but, really, I cannot enter into it.

GODF. *(At door, apart.)* She will not enter into it.

PAT. What's that?—somebody listening?—*(Looks round —PATTY goes to GODFREY'S door, pulls it close; then crosses to GEORGE WHARTON'S room, who has turned the lock, while PATTY has been at the other side.)*—Mr. Wharton's door is locked; half-an-hour ago, he was fishing in the canal.—*(In a low voice to ISABEL.)*—Now, my dear mistress, this frolic cannot last three minutes; let us make Mr. Fairfax think that you accede to his ridiculous proposal. He is in his own

study—that made me close his door—ha! ha! he has emptied his books out,—has been boring the chest to give air. He asked me what he should put at the bottom of the box—“something very soft,” said he. “Your own head,” thought I.—It is but a frolic, Miss; step in—there is no danger,—I shall keep the real key, and give him another.

ISAB. O Patty, in my father’s absence!

PAT. Miss, Godfrey Fairfax is that mad brain, we must deceive to get rid of him.

ISAB. Well, to save myself from such a maniac, I suppose I must appear to consent.

PAT. Do not hesitate—I shall not leave you—come!

(Exeunt ISABEL and PATTY into room, R. D. flat.)

(GODFREY peeps from door.)

GODF. They have gone into the room—Isabel then must have consented,—enchancing, high spirited girl!—Stay, I have Patty’s permission to look through the stained window. *(Goes to it.)* My Isabel has put her cloak on—good!—she wraps her shawl around her beautiful head—charming creature;—Patty now persuades her to step into the chest—

GEORGE W. *(Apart at door.)* The devil!

GODF. They both endeavour to suppress their laughter—ha!—good, good; they shake hands—bid farewell—Patty locks the box—faithful, excellent friend—she comes.

(Enter PATTY with a key in her hand—she goes up to GODFREY, mysteriously,—gives him key.)

PAT. You have seen all!

GODF. All—all—

PAT. My integrity?

GODF. You have amply proved it.

PAT. And the 20*l.* note?

GODF. There. (*Giving it.*)

PAT. The waggon is to call for your luggage,—we expect it every moment. (*Affects to weep.*) Be kind to my mistress, Mr. Fairfax.

GODF. Kind! I adore her,—I will worship her!

PAT. Think, think of the part I have taken in this affair.
(*Wipes her eyes.*)

DR. PLYMPTON, (*without.*) Patty! Patty!

PAT. (*Alarmed.*) The Doctor! the deuce! I did not expect him back this hour.

(*Enter DOCTOR PLYMPTON, L.H.*)

DOCT. P. Ah! Godfrey, my dear boy; I apologize for my absence on the last day you are to remain with us. The ship, the Charming Sally, positively sails to-night—(*PATTY is creeping towards ISABEL'S room*)—Don't go away, Patty, I want you. (*PATTY returns unwillingly.*) I have sent directions for the waggon to call for the baggage, which is, I trust, safely packed up.

GODF. Thank you, Sir; all is packed safely!

DOCT. P. I have ordered you a post chaise; you can then, my dear young friend, follow your trunks, and your chest of books (which I carefully packed myself) at your own convenience to Bristol. (*PATTY is stealing away.*) Patty—here—come back; I told you I wanted you—Mrs. Hassock, the kind lady of our pastor, has made me a present of half-a-dozen pork pies—you know, she is famous for them—she would not allow me to bring them away in my hand—(*PATTY is going to the room door; he takes her by the wrist and puts her across*)—go, I say, to Mrs. Hassock's; give Dr.

Plympton's compliments, and you have come for the pies. (*Putting her off,—PATTY, in despair, looks wistfully at GODFREY.*)

PAT. But I want to speak to my Missis, Sir.

DOCT. P. You can speak to her when you come back—here, take the key to unlock the iron gate. (*Gives PATTY the key.*) (*Exit PATTY.*)

DOCT. P. Godfrey, my young friend, you are abstracted.

GODF. A thousand pardons, Sir; I was thinking of that which I have to take with me.

DOCT. P. And of those, too, whom you leave behind? Poor Isabel! You must say good bye to her; you have been early friends, and separation will naturally affect her. I wonder where she is: the last time I saw her, was when I was in the garden, entering the box—

GODF. (*Starts.*) Sir! the box? (*Glances at the window.*)

DOCT. P. Entering the box plantation—the old box trees here, you know.

GODF. (*Aside.*) I breathe again!

(*A tap at the door.*)

DOCT. P. Come in.

(*Enter JOB, L.H.*)

JOB. Please Sur, the waggon *is* stopped at the gate.

DOCT. P. Say, *has* stopped at the gate.

JOB. *Has* stopped at the gate. Thank ye, Sir.

DOCT. P. So early? Then, Godfrey, let us first look to the other articles; the chest of books in that room must be packed on the top. Come, my young friend, we can send the men up for that, when the other baggage is disposed of.

(*Takes GODFREY's arm.*)

GODF. As speedily as possible, Sir.

(Hurries the DOCTOR off, L.H.)

JOB. *(Stares.)* Tarnation! what a hurry he's in; he'll pull old master neck and heels down stairs. *(Exit L.H.)*

(GEORGE WHARTON enters from his room—he crosses to observe that they are all out of hearing.)

GEORGE W. What have I overheard? Patty gone! Whether this is a frolic or not, it appears to me to be of too serious a nature. *(Goes to the door of ISABEL'S room.)*

ISABEL'S voice heard, faintly—Help! help! help!—*(and knocking.)*

(GEORGE WHARTON throws open the door—the chest visible.)

GEORGE W. And the poor girl really entombed there. No key—there is no time to lose, I must force the lock—even so Romeo rescued his Juliet.

“For (as I said before) when a Lady's in the case,
All other things of course gives place.”

(Strikes at the padlock with a poker—opens the lid.)

(ISABEL appears; GEORGE WHARTON raises her from the chest.)

GEORGE W. What trick is this?

ISAB. Oh! dear Mr. Wharton, how opportunely have you arrived.

GEORGE W. How is it that I find you in this extraordinary situation?

ISAB. My silly good nature has led me into the dilemma—that horrid Godfrey—

GEORGE W. His conduct is atrocious, and I shall immediately mention it to the Doctor.

ISAB. Not at this moment, George—“forget and forgive”

has always been your motto, and I think I must make it mine.

GEORGE W. An absurd idea strikes me. You shall no longer indulge Patty with your confidence; she has been bribed by all parties. This chest, you see, is not perceptibly damaged; I could fasten it up again, without discovery; but then we must put in something to make it a proper weight.

ISAB. What! what? You must resolve speedily, George!

GEORGE W. Ha! ha! ha! ha!—it is almost too extravagant an incident; but, ha! ha! Godfrey this afternoon has shot Fitzmartyn's dog—ha! ha! Neptune shall take your place in the box, ha! ha! I can creep down the back stairs and bring the poor creature up, ha! ha! In the meantime, Isabel, you must, until Godfrey has departed, avoid Patty, and everybody—here's the key of my study—lock yourself in. Nay, I insist. (*Leads her to door, L.H.—she enters, and fastens it inside.*) And now for the defunct Neptune, ha! ha! ha! Godfrey, you shall have the worst of this frolic, ha! ha! ha!

(*Enters ISABEL'S room, arranges chest, and closes the door.*)

SCENE III.

The Garden, as before.

Enter PATTY, in her bonnet, door R.H.

PAT. The deuce take Mrs. Hassock and her pork pies! However, there are plenty of air holes in the trunk, and it is nicely lined with all the shawls. (*Looks off at the back.*) Who's that?—Mr. George Wharton—ah! he is looking at poor Neptune, that Godfrey shot!—trying to lift the dog up—the poor creter is dead enough. Well, that is nothing

to me,—the sooner I am off, the sooner I shall be back again.
—La! the Doctor! I must run.

(*Exit PATTY L.H., hastily, after unlocking the gate.*)

(*Enter DOCTOR PLYMPTON and GODFREY FAIRFAX, door R.*)

DOCT. P. I cannot divine where Isabel can be; I must wait till Patty returns,—she knows where to look for her.

GODF. I have no doubt of that, Sir.

(*Waggoner and JOB cross from the gate to the house, for the luggage.*)

DOCT. P. And now, my dear Godfrey, a few words at parting:—Give me credit for having done my best to form your mind and accomplishments. If you had imbibed all that I had intended, you would have been endowed with the critical accuracy of Plato—the precision and fidelity of Plutarch—

GODF. (*Impatiently.*) Sir, you are very good—

DOCT. P. You would have been filled with the fire, sweetness, and elegance of Homer—have possessed the universal knowledge and acuteness of invention of Aristotle—

GODF. Oh, Sir—

DOCT. P. And have acquired the high independence of spirit and superior genius of Socrates—that is, my dear boy, if you *had but retained all* I have taught you—

GODF. Sir, you do me too much honour; and as I perceive the waggon is at the gate—

DOCT. P. Aye—It is time your luggage should be placed in it.

(*Waggoner and JOB cross with baggage, from the house to the gate, and return for more.*)

(*Enter GEORGE WHARTON, R. door.*)

GEORGE W. (*Aside.*) "The deed is done"—and Neptune safely corded up in the chest.

GODF. Ah, my dear George! a hearty shake of the hand, and farewell. I do not say for a long period, because your father is soon expected from Demerara, when you will probably return with him to the island. Should that occur, I think I shall have a surprise for you; but let that happen as it may, there is no old friend I shall be so glad to see again as you.

(*Job and the Waggoner cross from the house with the chest.*)

(*Apart.*) There she goes. My beautiful courageous little heroine!

DOCT. P. Ah! take great care of that box; it contains that which I hold most dear—

GODF. Eh!

DOCT. P. I packed it up with my own hands—all in perfect order—not a single dog's ear.

GEORGE W. (*Stifles his laughter.—Aside.*) There are two dog's ears.

GODF. The books,—aye! George Wharton, what makes you smile? Job, you stupid fellow, do not jolt the chest in that way.

JOB. It be heavy, Sir.

GODF. (*Pretending to assist.*) Let me help you. Pray be very, very careful with this, and be sure and keep this side upwards. You perceive it is directed, "*To Godfrey Fairfax, Esq., Demerara. Keep this side upwards.*" (*Puts his face on a level with the chest.*) I am here,—we shall get the trunk out safely, and I shall follow in a minute to Bristol

(*They carry it through the gate.*) — (*Apart.*) — Victoria !
Victoria !

GEORGE W. (*Apart.*) Neptune triumphs ;—we shall have
a storm presently. (GEORGE *retires up, laughing.*)

DOCT. P. Godfrey, though you now quit your old preceptor,
and have finished, as it were, your education, let the
valuable contents of that chest ever receive your warmest
consideration.

GODF. I pledge myself faithfully to you, Sir, that you shall
be obeyed. I will love, honour, and obey.

DOCT. P. I did not imagine that you were so wedded to
your books.

(*Enter JOB and a Postboy, L.H.*)

JOB. The waggon be gone, sur, and this lad has brought a
po-chay for Muster Godfrey. (*To GODFREY.*) You are going
to a warm climate, sur ; I wish you every enjoyment, and
hope you may have an everlasting tap of ale always running
into your mouth.

GODF. Then, farewell to all. Job—my cloak !

DOCT. P. Good bye, good bye, Godfrey ; but you are in
a tremendous hurry.

GODF. Good bye, sir. Once more, adieu, George !—
Here, Job, here's something to remember me. (*Gives JOB
money.*) Good bye.

(*Exeunt GODFREY, POSTILION, and JOB, at gate.*)

DOCT. P. Parting with a pupil nine years under my roof.
(*Wipes his eyes.*) It is natural to feel a passing grief—and
there's poor George Wharton, too, on the garden bench, en-
deavouring to conceal his tears. (*George is seated with his
back to Doctor Plympton, holding his sides, laughing.*) It

affects George too deeply—he is becoming hysterical—Patty, I say, a bottle of salts. George—come George, my friend, recover yourself. How he is agitated! You have lost your companion.

GEORGE W. Ye—ye—yes, sir. (*Apart.*) But Godfrey has got his. (*Bursts into uncontrollable laughter.*)

DOCT. P. Hysterics—hysterics—he is in hysterics! Patty! Isabel! Cook! burnt feathers, sal volatile, brandy! (*Runs off—door, R. H.*)

GEORGE W. Beyond my warmest wishes. Ha! Patty returns; a deceitful little witch, she must be mystified too. I'll retire out of sight. (*Exit GEORGE WHARTON, R. H.*)

(*Enter JOB, gate, L. H.*)

JOB. There, they be all off. Muster Godfrey's chay has passed the waggon. I didn't tell him the van be going round by Clifton afore it reaches Bristol. Pretty heap of luggage; I've made my arms ache helping the things into the waggon.

(*Enter PATTY, with a dish of pies, gate, L. H.*)

PATTY. Here are the pork pies. Now to make haste up stairs, and release my Missis; she must have been in a fine taking. Very unlucky to send me away just at the very moment.

JOB. Why Patty, where have you been? Mr. Fairfax is gone.

PAT. Indeed! then we are all safe. (*Aside.*)

JOB. I ha' been helping him with his luggage;—the chest we brought out of the library was a heavy one to be sure.

PAT. What?

JOB. The carter and I had a pretty job to get it down the

crooked cork-screw staircase—we were obliged to ease it here, and humour it there, and bump it so, back'ards and for'ards—but, lard, it was for all the world like a coffin with some one it.

PAT. What chest?

JOB. A chest from Miss Plympton's room.

(PATTY shrieks, drops the dish of pork pies, and swoons on the bench. DR. PLYMPTON enters with a smelling-bottle, and lighted brown paper.)

DOCT. P. Here's the sal volatile. Patty, Patty! where is Miss Isabel? (PATTY rushes past him, crying, into the house.) What can have happened? All my pork pies, too, scattered about (*stoops to pick them up*), and here—books lying here and there in the flower beds! (*picking up volumes and pies alternately.*) “Homer,” “Virgil”—a pie quite spoiled—“Sophocles”—(JOB assists him)—Crust muddy—

(Re-enter PATTY, R. H., in a state of trepidation, with bonnet and shawl put on awry.)

PAT. (*sobbing, apart.*) She's gone! she's gone! she's gone—it is all my doing, and I shall be hanged!

DOCT. P. Patty, how came these books here? Mr. Godfrey's books—the very books I packed up in the chest, and, how the girl stares! Why have you thrown these pies in all directions?

PAT. I'll run after the waggon—yes; my brain spins,—Doctor, I'm only going to Bristol for a few minutes.

DOCT. P. What are you going to Bristol for? Where is my daughter? tell me, where is Isabel?

(Enter GEORGE WHARTON, R. H.)

GEORGE W. In vain have I endeavoured to find Miss Plympton. (*Crosses to Patty, with mock seriousness.*) Patty, I suspect you. Patty, you will find yourself *in the wrong box.* (PATTY screams, and runs off at gate, crying.)

DOCT. P. What is the matter? where is Isabel?

GEORGE W. Here, sir! (*Goes to door and leads on ISABEL.*) Step in, and I will explain all—ha, ha, ha! (ISABEL and WHARTON laugh heartily.—ALL BUSTLE.)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

The High Road in the neighbourhood of Bristol.

CHARLES FITZMARTYN *discovered*—DICK *enters to him.*

C. FITZ. What have you done with the horses?

DICK. Old Bob, the road-mender, is holding 'em, sir.

(Points off.)

FITZ. Devilish strange! no answer to my letter to Miss Plympton—no communication from Patty—

DICK. And, stranger still, sir, Neptune hasn't found his way back.

FITZ. If any one dared to harm that noble animal—

DICK. Aye, sir, he's a favourite of yours,—“Love me, love my dog.” Why—yes—no, it isn't—*(Looking off)*—Yes.

FITZ. What is it?

DICK. See, sir, if Patty Wallis isn't coming this way in her pattens like mad.

FITZ. Patty—go you to the horses—*(Exit DICK L. H.)*—a reply to my note. *(Enter PATTY, walking across very fast, in pattens, an umbrella up, R. H.)* Hey! Patty, Patty!

PAT. Don't stop me, sir—it's a matter of life and death!

FITZ. Have you any answer to my letter?

PAT. Any answer to it must come from Bristol.

FITZ. From Bristol?

PAT. Yes—Miss Plympton must be there by this time.

FITZ. Isabel at Bristol! how did she get there?—has she gone by the stage?

PAT. No: the box.

FITZ. Outside?

PAT. No, inside—she has gone by the waggon.

FITZ. Patty, you are wild.

PAT. Well I may be. (*Sobs.*) I shall be hanged or transported; but I deserve it, and I don't care which.

FITZ. Let me understand you?

PAT. I can't wait. Have you seen a waggon pass?—Missis is in extreme danger.

FITZ. Speak—how?

PAT. She is carried away, unknown to her father, in a chest of Godfrey Fairfax's.

FITZ. Confusion!—impossible!

PAT. It's all true—it was done whilst I was out. A large box, with a direction on the top—"Godfrey Fairfax, Esq., Demerara. *This side to be kept upwards.*" "*To be left at the office till called for.*" (*Sobbing.*)

FITZ. My horses are here; I'll gallop to Bristol—I shall be there before it arrives.....

PAT. That's a capital thought, sir. Ride—ride for your life—ride to the waggon office; I'll walk on as quick as I can; perhaps I shall get a lift.

FITZ. You are sure of the direction to which she has gone—it is to Bristol?

PAT. Direction—no—the direction is to "Godfrey Fairfax, Demerara. *This side to be kept upwards.*" (*Sobs.*) I'll

walk on like a sinner as I am, for, if I don't overtake Miss Isabel, I'll go and end my days in the penitentiary. That I have made my mind up to. I'll give the Doctor warning—have my head shaved, and be a warning to all other wicked-minded maids. That I'm determined on. "Godfrey Fairfax, Demerara." "To be left at the office till call'd for," &c.

(*Exit, crying, L. H.*)

FITZ. My horse will not be long carrying me into Bristol. "To be left at the office till called for." If I restore Isabel to her father, he might relent, and consent to our union.

(*Exit FITZMARTYN, L. H.*)

SCENE II.

Waggon Yard at Bristol; on one side the Booking-office; on the other a Shed, with Piles of Luggage.—STRAWQUILL and IKEY discovered.

STRAW. (*With Office Book.*) "108," hamper—wine.

IKEY. (*Reads direction.*) "Robert Woodbridge, Esq., Pump Court, Temple."

STRAW. "109," deal case.

IKEY. "Pinchbeck and Co., Minorities."

STRAW. "110."

(*Enter GODFREY FAIRFAX, hastily, L. H.*)

GODF. (*Almost breathless.*) How the deuce have I missed it? Is the waggon come in?

STRAW. (*Calmly.*) Waggon! what waggon? "110."

IKEY. "Jones, Bath."

GODF. (*Impatiently.*) My good man, *the* waggon!

STRAW. (*Very slowly.*) *The* waggon!—why, how should we know what you mean by *the* waggon? “111.” We have a number of waggons come here. “111,” hops.

IKEY. “Mr. Dance, Back-steps, Reading.”

GODF. I shall lose my patience; I have already sacrificed some minutes.

STRAW. “112,” Ikey.

GODF. Fire and fury! fellow, answer me, has the waggon arrived?

STRAW. (*Staring at GODFREY.*) Fellow! I say, my master, do you think you’ll get any thing out of us by that there ungentleman-like language? “112,” “Box of Soap.”

IKEY. “Dewdney, Marlboro’.”

GODF. Your incivility shall be reported, sirrah!

STRAW. May be; but wont our *proper-rioters* laugh when they comes to hear that you axed for *the* waggon? Why there are forty-two waggons puts up here. “113.”

GODF. (*Apart.*) These rascals are impenetrable. I must bribe—here’s half-a-crown. The waggon I inquire for passes Doctor Plympton’s house.

STRAW. So do six-and-thirty of them.

GODF. Confound and curse all, and every thing!

STRAW. Now, as you’re polite at last, let’s see if we can answer you. (*Comes forward.*) What time did this here waggon pass Dr. Plympton’s?

GODF. Three o’clock.

STRAW. Then that’s “Mouldy’s Devizes.” To-day is Thursday—it wont be here this hour; it goes round to Clifton on Thursdays.

GODF. (*Apart.*) Oh, my poor Isabel! what a frightful imprisonment for you!

STRAW. If you'll walk in, and wait in the office, you can sit on that tub; and there's last Sunday's paper.

GODF. No—no—I cannot sit—I'm too anxious. An hour—a whole hour of suspense. I'll order a chaise-and-four—ah, Isabel!—Isabel! (*Exit GODFREY, L. H.*)

STRAW. That's a queer Sammy however—here's his half-crown,—Ikey, get me a pint of sherry.

(*Gives money to IKEY, who goes off. Exit STRAWQUILL into office.*)

(*Enter DICK, L. H. 2 E.*)

DICK. No; it is not come in yet—so, I am to watch for the waggon, hire a porter, carry the chest to Tuffin's hotel, and wait for my master; and, above all, to take care Fairfax does not see me. I'll go six to four up to any *figger* that Master Fitzmartyn jockies Master Fairfax—two pretty boys. (*Goes to office door.*) Be kind enough to tell me where I can find a porter, governor?

STRAW. Look about the yard; there's generally two or three of 'em asleep. (*Retires.*) (*IKEY carries bottle and glass to STRAWQUILL, and exit.*)

DICK. (*After looking about, goes to the luggage; removes a bag of hops, behind which CÆSAR is discovered asleep.*) Here's one—a Mungo too—the very thing. What a sleeping beauty! “Hoy!” “hey!” Mr. Snowball! (*Waking him.*)

CÆSAR. (*Rising.*) Hallo—debble—Misser! Whatty want, sar?

DICK. You're a porter? (*CÆSAR nods.*) I've a job for you: I want you to carry a chest for me; it will be heavy;

but you are hardly strong enough ;—a porter should be as strong as Hercules !

CÆSAR. I am not so trong as Harcles ; but I hab got what Harcles nebber had—*I got a truck !!* I'm not one of dose common black men, carry load on dere head—no, not by no means. Where is de chest, sar ?

DICK. I expect it by the waggon every minute.

CÆSAR. Oh ! (*Offering tin box.*) Take pinch snuff, sar ?

DICK. Thank ye, no. (*Aside.*) Don't like his black fingers—queer *donkey* beans, them.

CÆSAR. Berry good snuff, sar—my own mixture—Oroonooko and Scotch. (*Sniffs.*) Better snuff, sar, than any of dose common black men take !

DICK. What do you mean by those common black men ? All negroes are alike.

CÆSAR. Oh, dear sar, no. You no sabby. Different shape altogeder—some got cucumber shank—others, good ansum leg (*exhibits his leg conceitedly*)—some got large flat nose.

DICK. Aye—a bottle of India rubber !

CÆSAR. Dem de common black men ! See, my nose straight, not flat ;—mine what 'em call a *Roman Catholic* nose !

DICK. But how do you account for the negroes generally having flat noses ?

CÆSAR. All dem common black men hab flat noses, cos—why, what do you tink ?—dey invariably sleep on dere faces—dam fools (*takes snuff.*)

DICK. Ah ! may be. But see, here comes the waggon. Go, you, and fetch your truck.

CÆSAR. Yes, sar ; dat carriage always ready—first on de

stand. Capital truck, sar; better than any of dose common black men—my carriage much more elegum than deres!—dam fools!—sleep on dere faces—make flat nose—dam fools! (*Exit CÆSAR, R. H.*)

DICK. Now must I be circumspect—the direction that I am to inquire for is written here (*produces paper.*) Should I manage this affair well, perhaps my master will reward me by paying me my last year's wages. (*Exit, R. H.*)

Enter STRAWQUILL from Office—(looks off.)

STRAW. “Mouldy's Devizes!”—gently now, there—one at a time, Ikey.

Re-enter CÆSAR, R. H., with paper—gives paper to STRAWQUILL, who reads it. (Apart.)

Chest directed “TO GODFREY FAIRFAX, ESQ., DEMERARA.” Here, Ikey, (*IKEY appears,*) hand that over—carriage to be paid.

IKEY. This way, blacky. (*Exeunt CÆSAR and IKEY, R. H.*)

STRAW. Confound the waggon! half-an-hour earlier than usual; interrupting a gentleman at his sherry (*goes into office.*)

Re-enter DICK, R. H.

DICK. It is all right—safely placed on the truck. (*Calls off.*) Mungo, follow me to Tuffin's Hotel. Hurrah! (*Exit DICK.*)

CÆSAR enters, lugging along the truck with the chest in it.

CÆSAR. Eh, hey; him dam heavy. (*Calls after DICK.*) Eh, sar; come lend him push behind. Golly, he know better—let de black man do de work—all right, sar; no matter—cuss if I work, if I could help it. (*Looks off.*) Iss; I come. Stay; take one pinch snuff—give great strength,

dat (*takes snuff*)—dere; now I strong enough—hey! (*Sings, and drags the truck off.*)

“Missy good ’oman, I telly for what O!

She boily de egg, and she give me de broth, O!

Ta ra lal, la la—ta ra lal, la la.’

(*Exit CÆSAR, L. H.*)

STRAWQUILL *re-appears at office door, filling a glass of wine.*

STRAW. Here’s my very good health—(*deliberately*)—hip, hip, hip, hurrah! (*drinks.*)

Enter GODFREY FAIRFAX.

GODF. How slowly does this hour pass! (*looks at his watch.*) Eh, what is that I see—a waggon arrived? (*goes to office.*) I hope you have taken particular precautions in unloading it—I wrote “*with care—this side upwards,*” in very large letters. (*Drags STRAWQUILL forward.*)

STRAW. What is it, sir?

GODF. A chest of mine.

STRAW. Who was it addressed to, sir?

GODF. Why, to me, certainly—“GODFREY FAIRFAX, ESQ., DEMERARA.”

STRAW. To be left at the office till called for—

GODF. Exactly; where is it? I’ve not much time to lose.

STRAW. Why, sir, it has been gone away from here.

GODF. Gone away?

STRAW. Yes, sir; some minutes ago.

GODF. What do you mean? Didn’t I direct it to be left here till called for?

STRAW. Very well; and it was called for. A little black porter called for it, and took it away with him on a truck.

GODF. Who was he? Where has he taken it? I'll be the ruin of you. The contents of that chest are invaluable.

STRAW. I suppose you didn't insure it? We don't answer for anything above the value of five pounds—vide the notice on our tickets—(*shewing one.*)

GODF. You drive me mad—can you give me no clue?

STRAW. None in the world!

GODF. You know not what you have done. There was a lady in the chest.

STRAW. A lady! (*staring.*) eh?—my master—are you a surgeon?

GODF. Surgeon! She *was* alive. Oh! if you have a spark of pity in your bosom, you will put me in the way of tracing the villain.

STRAW. I think you ought to lose no time.

GODF. Psha! I know that well enough—

STRAW. If I were in your place, I would be off directly.

GODF. Off? What do you mean by “be off?”

STRAW. Why off after the little black porter, to be sure.

GODF. Which way did he go?

STRAW. Not knowing, can't say. (*Retires up to the office.*)

GODF. What a dilemma! Poor Isabel!—almost buried alive—distraction!

Enter PATTY WALLIS, in agitation, R. H.

GODF. Patty here?

PATTY. Oh, Mr. Fairfax—seeing you, I trust all is safe—I got a lift on the road—Pullett, the poulterer, took me up in his cart—thank mercy, I've met you; because surely you have found my poor Missis!

GODF. No, no, Patty—she is lost, I fear, altogether.

PATTY. I've cried more tears than ever I cried afore, or ever will again.

GODF. Why did you propose this mad scheme?

PATTY. Why did you force me to it? Didn't the chest arrive?

GODF. Oh, yes, it arrived safely; but somebody else has fetched it away. (*Waks up, agitated.*)

PATTY. (*Apart.*) Then Mr. Fitzmartyn has got his love at last, perhaps.

GODF. A black porter has carried off Miss Isabel on a truck.

PATTY. (*Stares.*) A black porter! Ugh! Mr. Godfrey—don't stand shilly shally here—call out "porter" till you are hoarse.

GODF. "Porter!" "Porter!" "Porter!" "Porter!"

Enter IKEY.

GODF. Here—here's a sovereign—send all your fellows over the town to find a black porter.

IKEY. That is easy enough, sir; there are at least five-and-twenty black porters in Bristol.

GODF. This is a little man.

IKEY. They are of all sizes, sir, big and small.

GODF. Fire and fury! I must speak to all the black porters in Bristol—it is an affair of life and death! I will give twenty sovereigns to recover the lost chest.

PATTY. (*Takes bank note from her bosom.*) Here's twenty pounds more. Forty pounds reward to discover the lost chest!

STRAW. Forty pounds reward!—send for the crier. Find all the black porters in Bristol—send them here!

(*Exit IKEY.*)

STRAWQUILL *re-enters office.*

GODF. I am bewildered. The *Charming Sally* lies at Kingroad—the wind is fair, and sail she will this evening. Unfortunate fellow that I am!—every moment is an age to me.

PATTY. Ah! Mr. Godfrey—you were like a West *Hingy* hurricane; if you had but have let me manage the matter my own way—

GODF. Psha, Patty! don't come now with *your* cursed caterwauling, and—

PATTY. If you had followed my advice—

GODF. I did follow your advice, and be hanged to it; and see the result. Stay—I will go into the office, and write a proper description for the crier to read—they have sent to seek for him. I will have a posting bill printed. This is the first decided scrape I ever fell into in my life, and you, Patty, are at the bottom of it. (*Exit GODFREY into office.*)

PATTY. Oh! how tired I am (*seats herself on a package.*) You might knock me down with a straw; but as they've sent for the crier, I'll dry my tears. Patty, Patty, Patty! you've had too many curling irons in the fire! Poor old Doctor—what a state of mind he must be in—dear Mr. George, too, (*sobs*)—he gave me this pearl broach—I can't help weeping, when I think of all I have *got*, and all I have *lost*—

The CRIER crosses, R. H., with a bell in his hand, and enters the office.

PATTY. That's the crier, I suppose. And my Missis to be conveyed away by a black porter (*sobs.*) If I have a

horror in the world, it is a black man. I am half frightened at the tawneys and whitey-browns, and the *Cruels*; but a real downright black man makes me positively faint.

Enter a BLACK PORTER, R.H.—he approaches PATTY's elbow.

1st B. POR. Please, Mum, did you want me?

PATTY. Ugh! (*Screams.*) Talk of the devil—(*Calls.*) Mr. Fairfax!

Enter 2nd BLACK PORTER, L.H.

2nd B. POR. Which is de lady want a porter? (*PATTY encounters him; rushing to the opposite side she meets 3rd and 4th Black Porters; they squabble amongst themselves to be employed by PATTY. The Crier comes from office-door, ringing bell, and reading, "Lost or stolen!—a large chest." GODFREY enters from the office—PATTY seizes his arm for protection—all cross and exeunt R.H. in bustle.*)

SCENE III.

Room in Tuffin's Hotel—door in flat.

FITZMARTYN, DICK, and CÆSAR discovered.—*The chest on the floor, open.—Inside the door, and in sight of the audience, lies Neptune, deceased.—A table, with wine, bottles, and glasses; chairs.*

FITZ. This villainous trick!—and my poor dog too—is this the manner in which you have found your way back to your master? Dick, Dick, this is a pretty mistake you have made!

DICK. Sir, I am dreadfully down in the mouth.

CÆS. (*Apart.*) Ha! what 'um pack up a dead dog for, dat's what I should like to know?—(*Taking snuff.*)

FITZ. Instead of the fair form of the blooming Isabel! Fairfax shall answer for this insult!—and you, you black rascal, you, I suppose, are in the plot. (*Shaking CÆSAR.*)

CÆS. No, sar—shame, sar! I'm hired by dat gentleman to bring de chest here, on my truck. I bring him here, sar—you open de box—you so agitated, you can hardly breathe—you see Newfoundland dog dead—you fly into rage, and trow de aminal at my face and knockee me down, spoil my frill—shame, sar! I shall go to de mayor and make complain—got de dog's feathers stickum all over me now—(*brushing himself.*)—Please pay de porter, sar.

FITZ. Pay you?—(*Apart.*)—Yes, I'll pay you, and that deceitful witch Patty into the bargain!

(*Walks round the stage, followed by CÆSAR.*)

CÆS. Sar, you pay me, please—no law in Bristol for you to pitch a dead dog at a porter's head—ticket porter—respectful fader of a family—seven—sar!

DICK. (*Interposing.*) Hush!—are you the father of a family?

CÆS. Iss, sar; I've got seven children in arms.

DICK. What a rookery!

FITZ. (*Apart to DICK.*) Pay him, and kick him out.

DICK. (*Apart to FITZ.*) Sir, this fellow would not be able to hold his black tongue; if exposed, we should have the laugh terribly against us.

FITZ. Aye, true; don't let us be laughed at.

(*CÆSAR has walked up to the chest, and reads the direction.*)

CÆS. 'Oh! murder!—cussee—um! "To Godfrey Fairfax, Esq., Demerara."—(*Aside.*)—My old massa I ran away from twenty years ago! (*Trembling.*)

DICK. What's the matter with you?

CÆS. (*Assuming composure, and offering tin box.*) Noting, sar—pinch of snuff, sar! (*Half aside.*) Godfrey Fairfax!

DICK. (*Overhearing CÆSAR.*) Godfrey Fairfax! humph!—(*Apart to FITZMARTYN.*)—This little porter isn't two-pence-halfpenny better than he should be! In my mind, sir, some of the roguery was committed 'twixt here and the waggon office; I lost sight of him, sir, for a time.

FITZ. There is some probability in that.

DICK. (*Apart.*) Let us fill him full of liquor, sir, and then pump him!

FITZ. Good!—(*To CÆSAR.*)—Come, my friend, you have had a heavy pull with this chest; there, there's your money, (*pays him,*) and now sit you down, and take a glass of wine.

CÆS. Oh! sar, you berry good, but I can drink him standing, saving your presence. (*Bowing.*)

FITZ. Psha! (*Forces him into a chair, and fills glasses.*) I am not one of those squeamish persons who object to sit down with a man of humble rank.

CÆS. Noble sentimum, dat—I plaud dat!

FITZ. Now, drink, my friend—here's your health!

CÆS. Sar, your berry good health, and many happy returns of de day.—(*Drinks.*)—Ah! dat nice stuff, dat.—(*DICK fills CÆSAR'S glass again.*)—Thankum, sar—your berry good health, and many happy returns!—(*Winks at DICK, and drinks.*)

FITZ. What!—you like it?

CÆS. I not so rude as to say no.

FITZ. Well, then, try another, my good fellow.

CÆS. I not so rude as to say no. (*DICK fills CÆSAR'S glass.*)

DICK. (*Apart to FITZ.*) Try and pump him now, sir!

FITZ. (*Apart.*) He is hardly ripe yet.—What's your name, my friend?

CÆS. Cæsar.

FITZ. Patrician, indeed!

CÆS. Sar?

FITZ. Are you the last of the Cæsars?

CÆS. No, certainly not; I've got three *ittle* Cæsars at home!

FITZ. Your sons? (CÆSAR *nods.*)

CÆS. Yes, sar, three Cæsars; de eldest we call *July Cæsar*, cause him born in July; de second, *August Cæsar*, cause he come into de world in August; and the third I call *Brute Cæsar*, cause he not *ansum*, like de rest of de family.—(CÆSAR *spruces up his hair and frill.*)

DICK. This *little porter* thinks no *small beer* of himself!

FITZ. Let us drink to the health of your boys!

CÆS. Wid all my heart, soul, and body, bless em; nice *ittle black children*, though I say so.—(*Drinks.*)—Here's all de *ittle Cæsars*!

FITZ. All the little Cæsars!—ha! ha! ha!—(*Drinks.*)

DICK. (*Drinks.*) All the little Cæsars!

CÆS. Beg pardon, sar,—(*Holds out his glass*)—neber forget de ladies—those boys have got a respectable moder, sar,—dere is a *Mrs. Cæsar* at your service.

FITZ. Indeed?—the health of Mrs. Cæsar in a bumper!—(DICK *fills the glasses.*)—Hip, hip, hip! hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

CÆS. (*Rises gravely,—stands on the chair.*) I know how to behave—gentleplums, for de honour you have done me—stay, de glass is empty.—(DICK *fills it.*)—Ah! dat all right

—you'd make excellent nigger, you—if you had but a black face!—gentleplums! (*bows*) for de honour you have done me, permit me to turn my bosom, and heart-burn thanks!

(*Drinks, and re-seats himself.*)

DICK. (*Aside to FITZ.*) Try him now, sir.

CÆS. He! he! O la! I'm as happy as a bird!

DICK. (*Apart.*) A blackbird!

FITZ. I am pleased to perceive a smile on your cheerful, ebony countenance!—(CÆSAR *grins.*)—Now, my friend, how long have you been acquainted with Mr. Godfrey Fairfax?

CÆS. Hey? cussee!—(*Apart and alarmed.*)—Dey know I once run-away slave, den!—I confess I *was* employed by *Misser* Godfrey Fairfax, Demerara—berry bad man, sar, 'deed!

FITZ. What, he bought you over then?

CÆS. Yes, sar—he certainly *bought* me!

DICK. (*To FITZMARTYN.*) That is a rum business, Sir.

CÆS. *Rum* business—Oh, iss, Sir—plenty rum.

FITZ. Tell me, what did Mr. Fairfax give you for your services?

CÆS. Give me—*give*?—he! he!—he give me a good floggin'—dat's all.

FITZ. To make you bear the dog, I suppose?

CÆS. Dog; no—he make me bear de *cat*—cussed animul—dey say de cat has got nine lives—I know she got *nine tails*.

FITZ. Take another glass of wine—no harm can come to you. (*Fills.*) Now inform me candidly—where and when did Godfrey Fairfax put the dog into that chest.

CÆS. (*Stares.*) La! Massa—what you mean?—he! he! I haven't seen *Misser* Godfrey Fairfax dese twenty years.

DICK. (*Apart to FITZMARTYN.*) He's tipsy, Sir.

FITZ. Not for these twenty years? recollect yourself, Cæsar.

CÆS. (*To himself.*) Hush, foolis—what you let de bag out of de cat for—pooh—(*shewing signs of intoxication*)—when de wit is in, de liquor is out—just like common black man, dat! dam fool! Sar, I never don't know Mr. Godfrey Fairfax of Demerara, at all.

FITZ. (*Aside to DICK.*) There's some brandy on the table—the wine will not make him sufficiently communicative.

CÆS. (*Muttering.*) Stupid ass, Cæsar—I great mind to kick you, myself.

DICK. Taste this, my boy—

(*Gives a large glass of brandy to CÆSAR.*)

CÆS. Tank you, my boy. (*Drinks.*) Gentleplums, I'm jolly. (*Sings.*)

“ Missy good 'oman, I telly for why, O!

She boily sheep's head, and she give me de eye, O—

Ta ra lal la, &c.

ha! ha!—not seen Jonkanoo dese twenty years—oh! my skull, how him twist round like ball of worsted.

(*Drops his head on the table.*)

FITZ. We have overdone it, Dick—we have given him too much.

DICK. You opened too hotly upon him,—if you had left him to me, I would have drawn him on as gently as a glove.

FITZ. Hush—(*CÆSAR moves uneasily.*)

CÆS. (*Muttering, half asleep.*) Missis Cæsar, my lub—berry late—time to go to bed, my dear!

FITZ. There's a black pattern of conjugal affection. Well, here's an end of our adventure. What the devil is to be done with the chest?—we shall be prosecuted as swindlers,

perhaps, for we certainly have obtained goods under false pretences.

DICK. Well, Sir—then we had better pack up the chest as it is, and forward it to the ship.

FITZ. Good!

DICK. And—ha! ha!—(*points to CÆSAR*)—ha! ha! ha!

FITZ. What are you chuckling at?

DICK. Sir; he's dead asleep—suppose we put blacky in the box.

FITZ. Ha! ha! excellent—don't wake him—the villain evidently was a partner in the trick they played upon me. Sharp is the word—push the chest here—gently. (*They rapidly move the box, and very carefully lift CÆSAR in.*)

CÆS. (*Mutters as they lift him.*) What are you bout, my lub—lie quiet, Mrs. Cæsar!—(*they recline him at the bottom of the chest and cover the shawls over him*)—ah, put de blanket on—dere's good 'oman!—good night!

(*They close the lid.*)

FITZ. Ha! ha! ha!—this is a capital joke. Dick, you cord the chest up; I will pay the bill, and hire a boat to carry it on board. (*Exit FITZMARTYN, C.D.*)

DICK. (*Cording the chest.*) He's as quiet and as black as if he was in mourning for himself—la! to see his twinkling eyes, as he was getting fuddled, looking nine ways from Sunday—Master Godfrey is beat hollow at a joke—fasten up all tight, I shouldn't like the little fellow to roll into the sea, he'd frighten the fish so—there, all right and tight—to “GODFREY FAIRFAX, ESQ., DEMERARA.”—“KEEP THIS SIDE UPWARDS”—there's a pretty consignment of Day and Martin.

(*Re-enter FITZMARTYN, C.D.*)

FITZ. (*Calls off.*) This way, my lads—(*enter two boat-*

men)—convey this on board the *Charming Sally* as quick as you can,—she's lying at King Road.

BOATMAN. Oy, oy, master. (*As the boatmen lift the chest, FITZMARTYN and DICK are smothering their laughter.*)

SCENE IV.

Street in Bristol, part of the quay visible.

(*Enter GODFREY, agitated—PATTY, following, L. H.*)

GODF. Confound it, Patty, do hold your tongue—you make bad, worse—if I had not been a mad fool, and you—

PAT. Don't call me names, Sir—after every thing else—there's Miss Plympton, at this moment, (*sobs*), if she's alive, has all her bones broke, and must be a complete jelly with the jolting and knocking about in the waggons and warehouses—

GODF. Torture!—to the devil with your croaking—is it not enough that I must be driven about all over Bristol like a mad dog, without having you tied as a tin kettle to my tail?

PAT. Tin kettle!—now you've warmed me!—my blood boils. Sir—(*lays hold of his coat*)—I'll not leave you till you find my *Missis*. As for going back to Doctor Plympton's again, I daren't show my face there—

GODF. (*Disengaging himself.*) Yonder I see three or four of the black porters stepping into that house, let us make inquiries of them.

PAT. More of the black negroes!—faugh!—I'll wait here, Sir.

(*Exit GODFREY, R.H.*)

Enter DICK, L.H.

DICK. Hey, Patty!

PAT. Who's that?—Oh, Mr. Fitzmartyn's groom—Oh, Richard, have you heard—your master knows—the large chest—

DICK. Large chest?

PAT. Ah! Richard, I was in hopes that Mr. Fitzmartyn would have secured *that*—do you understand?

DICK. Oh! Ah!—he tried all he could—but there was a confounded *unlucky dog* in the 'plot.

PAT. (*Aside.*) He means Mr. Godfrey—what I'm to do I don't know—I'm a ruined young 'oman—(*weeps*)—that chest! that chest!

DICK. (*Aside.*) Snivel in earnest. PATTY, what was you saying about your character and a large chest—was it directed to "*Godfrey Fairfax, Esq., Demerara?*"

PAT. (*Eagerly.*) Yes—yes—

DICK. "*Keep this side upwards?*"

PAT. Oh—too true, too true!

DICK. Well then, I saw a couple of boatmen pull off with it, five minutes ago—(*Pointing off.*)

PAT. You don't say so?

DICK. And more than that—the chest swung about as if it had something alive in it—ha! ha! ha! ha!

PAT. Dreadful! you—did you hear any thing within—tell me, for mercy's sake?

DICK. I thought I heard a sort of hard breathing.

PAT. (*Calls off.*) Mr. Godfrey, Sir—make haste, here—

(*Exit R.H.*)

DICK. Mr. Godfrey, eh!—I must be missing—good bye, Patty—(*looks off*)—the boatmen are rowing away; good bye, my girl, I wish you luck. (*Exit laughing, L.H.*)

SCENE THE LAST.

Cabin of the West Indiaman, (the Charming Sally.)

GEORGE WHARTON and CAPTAIN discovered.

CAPT. How happy I am to see you, Mr. George.

GEORGE W. The arrival of my father's other ship from Demerara is most *apropos*; and he has taken me by surprise by coming himself. Kind old gentleman,—he has, moreover, consented to the dearest wish of my heart.

CAPT. What then—the handsome young lady invited on board with Doctor Plympton....

GEORGE W. Is to be Mrs. George Wharton—but tell me, Captain, has your passenger Godfrey Fairfax arrived yet?

CAPT. I am expecting him every instant. . (*Exit* CAPT.)

GEORGE W. Ha ! ha ! ha !—coming to meet my dear father in the *William and Mary* alongside. We must, for the fun of it, see the conclusion of the adventure of the *Wrong Box*.

Enter DOCTOR PLYMPTON and ISABEL, R.H. door in flat.

DOCT. P. Gad, my old friend your father looks as well as ever; he has sent us to have a peep at his outward-bound ship.

Re-enter CAPTAIN.

CAPT. Beg pardon; but, Mr. George, you told me to give you notice when Mr. Godfrey Fairfax should come on board.

ISABEL. Godfrey here !

GEORGE W. Do not be alarmed, my dear Isabel, he shall not approach you.

CAPT. Mr. Fairfax has got a young woman with him, and they both seem monstrous anxious about a chest that has just been hauled on deck.

GEORGE. (*To MR. WHARTON.*) The chest—ha! ha!—then Neptune has come to sea at last. My dear sir, I must be permitted to have a joke here with Godfrey before he sails—it will be a lesson to him for the future. Pray retire into this cabin, Miss Plympton; you can observe all that passes through the glass door. Doctor, oblige me by waiting and reprimanding the treacherous Godfrey for his rash conduct. Captain, be good enough to order the chest you speak of immediately in here—and not a word on deck as to the company below.

(*Exit CAPTAIN at one door R. H. Exeunt at another door L. H. GEORGE WHARTON and ISABELLA.*)

Enter SEAMEN with the chest R. H., which they place on the floor, and go off.

DOCT. P. Now must I put on one of my most severe looks—assume the austerity of a Draco, tempered with the benign wisdom of a Solon. (*Retires up.*)

Enter GODFREY FAIRFAX, followed by PATTY, R. H. door.

GODF. (*Observing the chest.*) Object of my anxious hopes! Oh! what a state of delightful agitation—my wishes at last consummated....

PAT. Oh! sir, let us break it open.

(*DOCTOR PLYMPTON stands between them—PATTY shrieks—GODFREY abashed.*)

DOCT. P. Young man, does not your heart reproach you?

Behold the friend you have so grievously endeavoured to injure!

GODF. Sir, I acknowledge my duplicity and base ingratitude.

DOCT. P. And you . . . viper—(*To PATTY.*)—but I have detected you in time.

PAT. Oh! sir, I'll confess all.

DOCT. P. Yes, when you find that I have ascertained all.

PAT. If ever there was an unhappy wretch in the world, it is myself; but, Doctor, bad as I have been, if ever you should forgive, I never can,—but, sir, let us know the worst at once. Miss Isabel is at this moment in the ship.

DOCT. P. I know that—I can almost hear her breath.

GODF. Alas!—Patty, take this key—all must be discovered and exposed. I humble myself in penitence before the fair object.

PAT. (*Eagerly uncording.*) No, I have a key of my own. How my heart beats! (*Kneels by the side of the chest—a rapping heard inside.*) She lives!

DOCT. P. (*Aside and surprised.*) A struggling in the chest—surely the dog has come to life again. (*To GODFREY.*) When you behold the forlorn object enclosed there, I trust your punishment will be complete. Open, I say, and wither your hearts.

GODF. (*Assisting violently.*) Come forth, my lovely creature,—bless the sight of your guilty admirer.

(*The lid rises.*)

PAT. Let me raise her—I will lift her myself.

(*Lifts up CÆSAR, wrapped in the shawls, who stares wildly about him. PATTY shrieks, and drops CÆSAR.*)

Enter from the Cabin, GEORGE WHARTON.

GEORGE W. Where is the black dog?

PAT. (*Hysterically.*) What mockery is this! Where—where is Miss Isabel?

CÆSAR. 'Pon my honour, Mum, I don't know.

GODF. Villain! explain—What have you done?

CÆSAR. 'Dat is just what I want to find out. Tell me, sar, why am I locked up in de box?—very strange.

GEORGE W. Mr. Godfrey Fairfax, I trust that you have found this an agreeable surprise.

CÆSAR. (*Alarmed.*) Godfrey Fairfax!—oh! (*Looks round.*) a ship. Oh! cussee,—he's got de poor slave again. (*Rolls in agony in the box.*) Cushee! mushee!

PAT. (*Apart.*) Where can Miss be, then, after all?

(*Glances into the box.*)

GEORGE W. Mr. Fairfax, by way of exciting your remorse and repentance, I crave permission to shew you my future bride.

(*Leads ISABEL from cabin-door.*)

GODF. Isabel!

PAT. My Missis again! O be joyful!—send me to the pennytentiary. I don't care for nothing as long as she is safe. (*Kneels to ISABEL.*)

DOCT. P. Thus, Godfrey, are you mortified. Let it prove a lesson to you. You, this night, sail for Demerara.

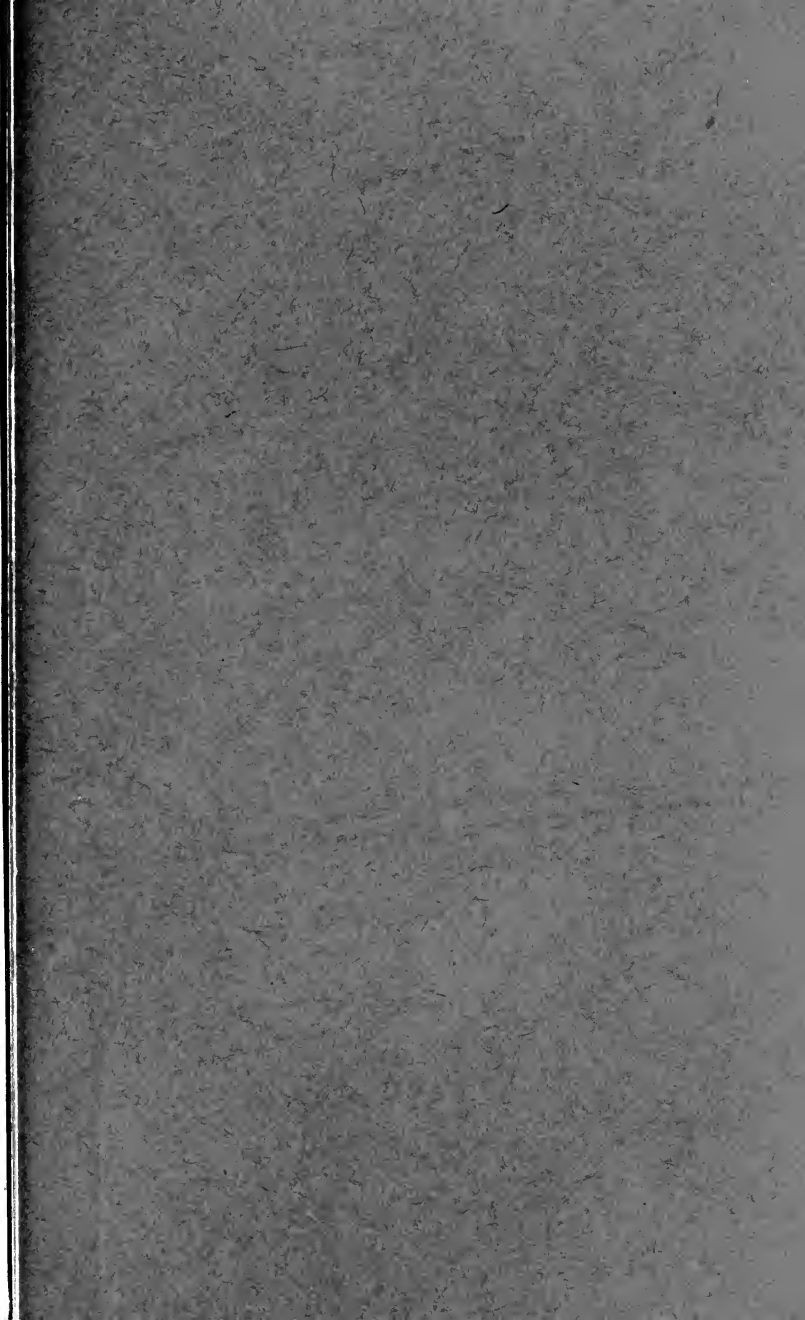
GODF. Sir, Miss Isabel! Pardon my folly—my weakness. George Wharton, sincerely do I wish you joy.

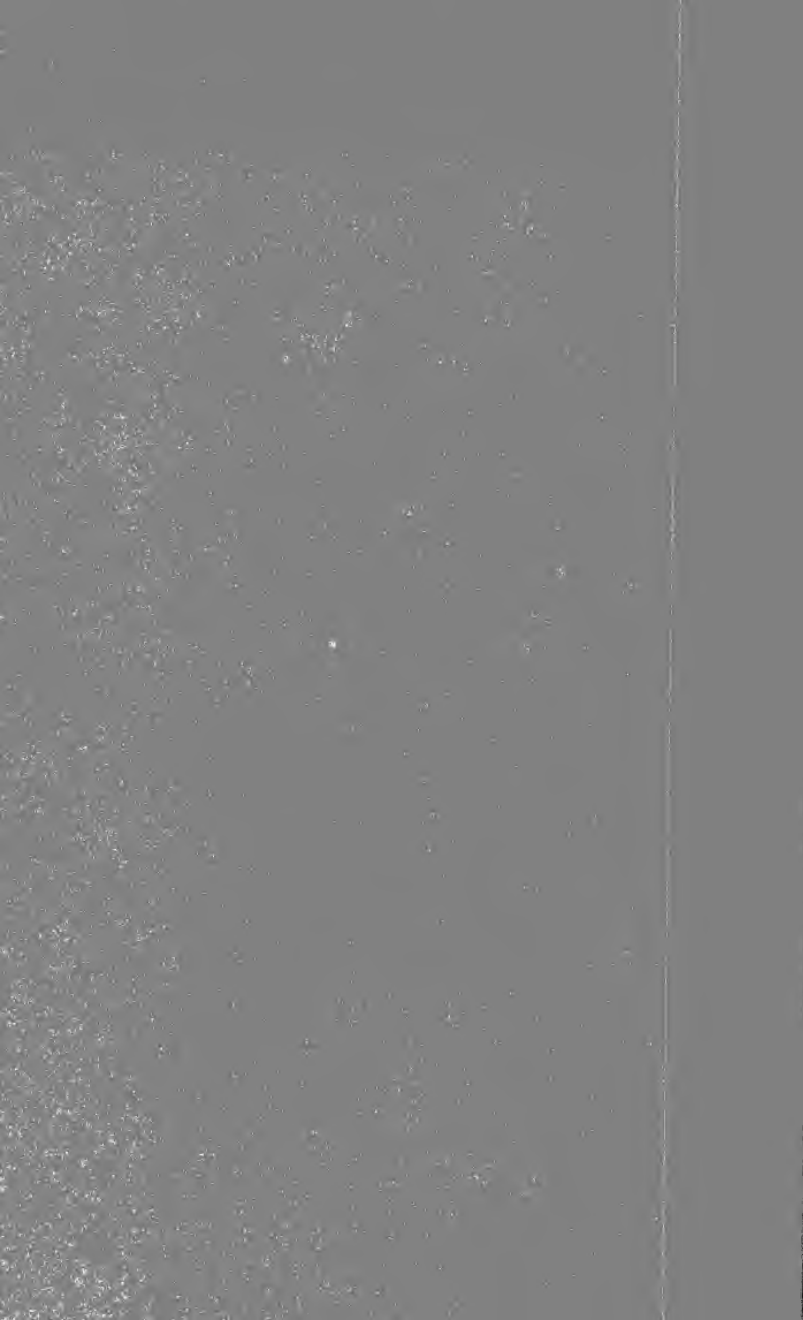
CÆSAR. (*Coming out of the box.*) Sail for Demerara! O don't takee me back dere. Fellow creatures, do not refund me to my old Massa! I kidnap! O what um become of Mrs. Cæsar, and all de 'ittle Cæsars—tink of my wife and family at Bristol.

DOCT. P. Calm yourself, my poor black Jack in the box—you are safe, and at liberty.

CÆSAR. Thank you, sar; but him like to make sure. Ladies and gentlemen, if you please will you take de “Little Black Porter” under your protection. Him not one of ’dem common black men wid flat nose. Dough me no like to go back to Demerara, me no mind being slave again to de jadies me see here—dey look so handsome; so, if you give us ’plause to-night, me no mind how often me found *in de wrong box*.

THE END.





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Peake, Richard Brinsley
In the wrong box

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